

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

- 1-21. (Cancelled).
22. (Previously Presented) A method for attaching soft tissue to bone, comprising:
preparing a transosseous tunnel in the bone;
placing an eyelet having a channel extending therethrough into an end of the tunnel, the eyelet being adapted to reinforce an opening at the end of the tunnel to prevent migration of a suture through an edge of the opening;
passing the suture through the channel of the eyelet, as well as through the transosseous tunnel;
and
affixing the soft tissue to the bone with the suture.
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the soft tissue comprises the spinatus tendon, and the bone comprises the humerus.
24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the eyelet is screwed into bone at the end of the tunnel.
25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the body of the eyelet is threaded for screwing the eyelet into the opening of the transosseous tunnel.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the eyelet is affixed into bone at the end of the tunnel by an interference fit.
27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of expanding the opening at the end of the tunnel prior to placing the eyelet therein.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the eyelet includes a flanged head portion.
29. (Currently Amended) A device for reinforcing a transosseous tunnel in bone, comprising:

an eyelet expandable member having a channel extending therethrough for receiving a suture, the eyelet including a head with a flange formed thereon that is adapted to prevent migration of a suture through bone at an edge of the opening of the tunnel; and

an insertion element including a channel extending therethrough, at least a portion of the insertion element including an outer diameter greater than an inner diameter of the channel in the expandable member such that, upon insertion of the insertion element into the expandable member, the expandable member expands to obtain a pressure fit with the opening of the transosseous tunnel.

30. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 29, wherein an outer surface of the eyelet is threaded for screwing the eyelet into the opening of the transosseous tunnel.

31. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 29, wherein the eyelet is adapted for interference fit within the opening of the transosseous tunnel.

32. (Cancelled).

33. (Previously Presented) A method for attaching soft tissue to bone, comprising:
preparing a transosseous tunnel in the bone;
placing an expandable member having a channel extending therethrough into an end of the tunnel, the expandable member being adapted to reinforce an opening at the end of the tunnel;
inserting an insertion element having a channel extending therethrough into the channel of the expandable member, at least a portion of the insertion element including an outer diameter greater than an inner diameter of the channel of at least a portion of the expandable member such that the insertion element is adapted to expand the expandable member to obtain a pressure fit with the bone opening;
passing a suture through the channel of the insertion element, as well as through the transosseous tunnel; and
affixing the soft tissue to the bone with the suture.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the expandable member is substantially cylindrical and the channel comprises an axial channel extending between its proximal and distal ends, and wherein the insertion element comprises an elongate insertion element.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the method is adapted for rotator cuff repair, and the expandable member is placed into an end of a transosseous tunnel in the humerus.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of placing an expandable member into an end of the tunnel comprises placing the expandable member into the end of the tunnel using an emplacement element.
37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein the expandable member is frangibly attached to the emplacement element.
38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the inserting step includes applying a force to the insertion element, and the method further comprises breaking the frangible attachment between the expandable member and the emplacement element by applying force to the insertion element subsequent to expansion of the expandable member in the bone opening.
39. (Previously Presented) A method for attaching soft tissue to bone, comprising:
preparing a transosseous tunnel in the bone;
placing an expandable member having a channel extending therethrough into an end of the tunnel using an emplacement element frangibly attached to the expandable member, the expandable member being adapted to reinforce an opening at the end of the tunnel;
applying a compressive force to said expandable member to expand its channel so that an outer surface of said expandable member engages with the bone;
breaking the frangible attachment between the expandable member and the emplacement element, and removing the emplacement element;
passing a suture through the channel of the insertion element, as well as through the transosseous tunnel; and
affixing the soft tissue to the bone with the suture.
40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the step of applying a compressive force comprises inserting an insertion element into the channel of the expandable member, the insertion element including an outer diameter greater than an inner diameter of at least a portion of the channel of the expandable member for expansion thereof upon engagement therewith.
41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the method is adapted for rotator cuff repair, and the emplacement element is used to place the expandable member into an end of a transosseous tunnel in the humerus.